

# History of Electronic Filing at the USPTO

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## ù Electronic Application System (EASY) Prototype

- PTO–developed "proof–of concept" software
- System designed to easily fit into applicant's current environment
- enter bibliographic information via electronic forms
- attach word processing, graphics or special purpose files
- 140+ pilot sites

## ù Applicant input solicited early in project (Nov. 1993)

# Customer Survey Implementation

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ù 13 sites visited in May – June 1994

ù Types of firms:

- intellectual property law firms
- general practice law firms with an intellectual property practice
- corporate law departments
- sole practitioner/consultant

# Customer Survey Objectives

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- ù Understand current applicant business practices
- ù Determine level of computer & communications capabilities
- ù How will electronic filing fit in the applicant's environment?

# Customer Survey Results

- Integrate with existing systems via an interface standard
- Bi-directional and linked: send & receive electronic communication
- Security, authentication, confidentiality, assured service availability, date-time stamping
- Eliminate diskettes as rapidly as possible
- Establish requirements for legal electronic records

# More Customer Survey Results

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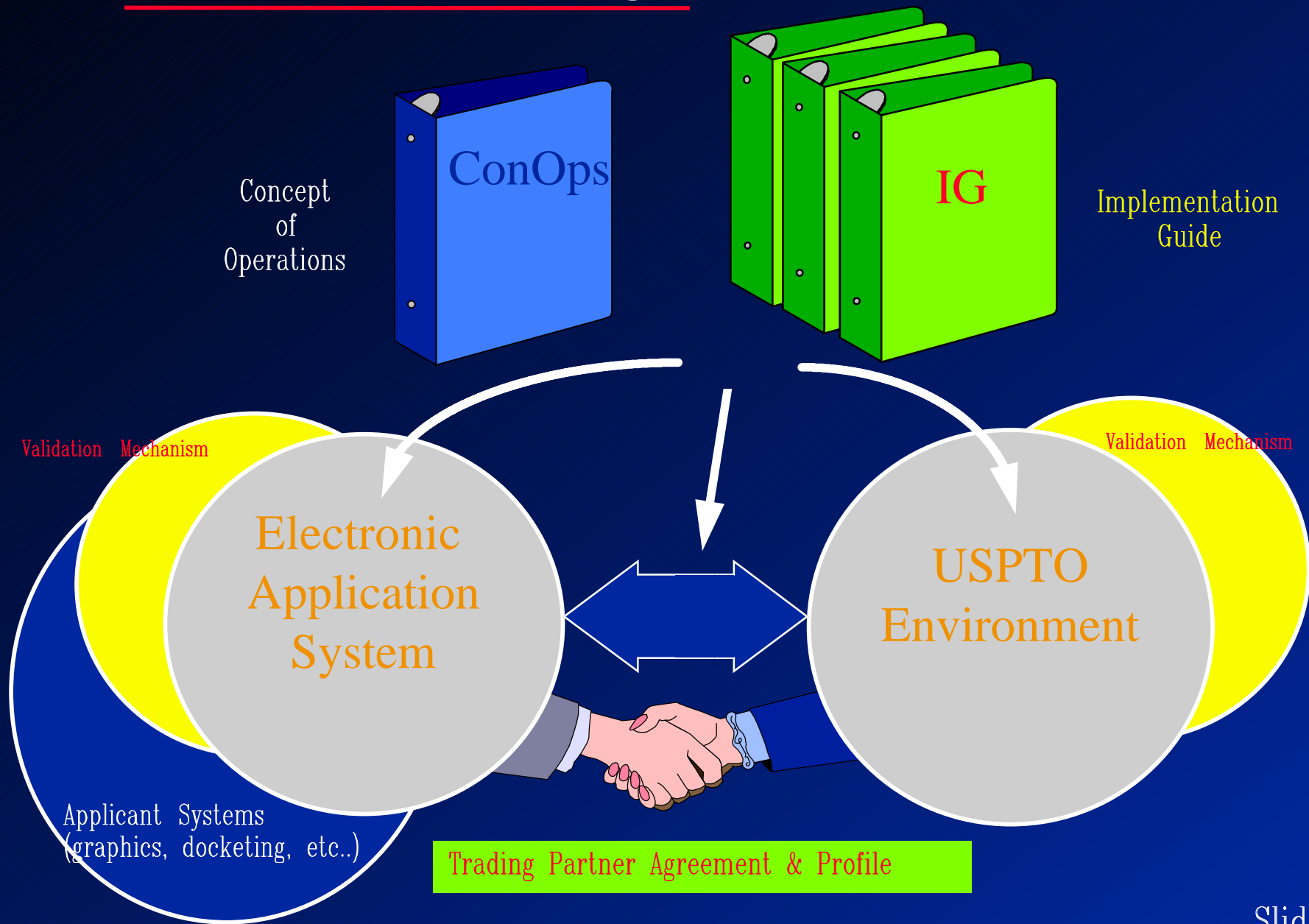
- ù Anticipate/include evolving standards and graphics
- ù Software developed by private industry
- ù Provide incentives
- ù Culture of PTO = applicant's business processes
- ù Customers want seamless electronic systems:  
electronic filing, funds transfer, records management,  
case processing, info. dissemination, etc.

# Electronic Filing – Project Phases

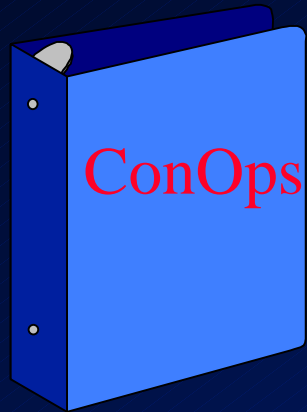
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- ù Phase 1: Prototype (electronic forms)
- ù Phase 2:
  - Complete "Implementation Guide for Electronic Filing"
  - Develop production version 1.0 of EASY/EPO software
  - Identify and solve Phase 3 and 4 issues
- ù Phase 3: Paperless Filing
- ù Phase 4: On-Line Filing

# Electronic Filing



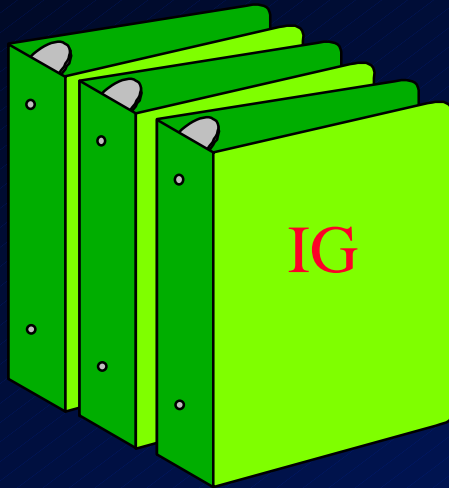
# Concept of Operations



- High-level view of “how electronic filing will work”
- Targeted to applicant community (e.g., attorneys, agents, managers)
- Describes technologies and guiding principles
- Companion to Implementation Guide



# Implementation Guide



- Complete technical detail for implementing an electronic application system
- Targeted to Information Systems departments, third-party vendors and system integrators
- Technical detail transparent to customers
- Uses existing standards and specifications
- Defines phased approach

# Concept Supports Customer Requirements

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Survey Results	Concept of Operations Approach Electronic Filing Capability
Integrate with applicant's existing systems	Implementation Guide defines data formats and interface, applicant <i>system not specified</i>
Bi-directional communications and linked documents	Fundamental capability
Security, authentication, confidentiality, assured service availability, date-time stamping	Value-Added Networks (VANs) provide these features, as well as Electronic Funds Transfer
Move beyond diskettes ASAP	On-line communication preferred, diskettes acceptable
Requirements for legal records	"Commitment capable" software
Forward-looking <u>re</u> standards & graphics	Open systems architecture
Market-developed tools	Based on accepted standards: COTS pieces exist and will evolve

# Phase 3 & 4 Issues

- ù Pageless representation of intellectual property information
- ù Allowable electronic interchange media (focusing on floppy diskette filing)
- ù Electronic Commerce Security Issues
  - Integrity
  - Confidentiality
  - Availability
  - Originator authentication
  - Non-repudiation
- ù Allowable File Formats
- ù Universal Electronic Filing Interchange Data Dictionary

## Next Steps

- ù Public comment on Implementation Guide (USPTO)
- ù Resolve issues for on-line filing (Note: they have been identified)
- ù Develop on-filing IG (target: June 1997)